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that the Government is benevolent even if its agents are not, and men say that they like the Europeans. There are other opposed currents of feeling, though; thus a cook to a European family said to me, 'The Portuguese do not wish us to learn' and a villager declared, 'The Portuguese say to the English that the Ovimbundu have tails.'[39] The great mass of the Ovimbundu seemed to be without political consciousness, or desire for independence; there is little nostalgia for the days of the caravans, and it is widely felt that the present is better than the past, since there is more contact with Europeans.

Traders in the neighbourhood were relatively few, compared to other parts of Umbundu country. At Chicunda there were three trading stores and people who did not like them went across the river to Cassongue. Traders try to prevent natives who live in their neighbourhood from dealing at other stores where they can get better prices, but this is not always effective. Some Ovimbundu realize that variations of price levels are related to such factors as proximity to the railway line. The traders are criticized for paying their servants low wages as compared with those paid in the coastal cities. Although there is a great deal of mutual suspicion between the traders and the Ovimbundu which is expressed in the arguing and haggling that takes place in the stores, there is none of the fear so noticeable in the people's attitudes to the *chefes*. Many traders have a smattering of Umbundu, and have a certain affection for the local people. Economically, the role of the traders is to receive the maize and other products grown locally for transport to the railway line, and to distribute trade goods to the villages. Their presence is also important in preventing the rise of any other system of trading by markets or pedlars.

The principal goods sold are blankets, cloths, and clothing of all sorts, including fancy items such as sun-glasses. There are also a good many bottles of wine, and also oil-lamps and kerosene tins, and electric torches. For literates or would-be literates, there are pens, pencils, writing-papers and slates. Such goods as bicycles, gramophones, and sewing-machines are generally

[39] i.e. The Portuguese say the Ovimbundu are savages and keep them from contact with other Europeans. The Bailundo area had not (up to September 1961) been affected by the revolt. However, a marked change in this attitude of submissiveness seems to have taken place.

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drinking-mugs, lanterns, metal plates, pens, pencils, wine, and writing slates are bought from the traders. Axe and hoe handles, buckets, bedsteads, beer, bows and arrows, chairs, fish-traps, mats, mush sticks, pottery, pounding-blocks, stools, tables, and small metal objects such as knives are made by Ovimbundu and may be sold locally. To this local trade may be added the selling of pieces of meat by anyone who has killed a pig, or gone hunting and killed a duiker. Very occasionally somebody who has bought cloths in a town or has some hand-made object superior to the local average may tour villages selling his goods as a pedlar.

The only trade which all recalls the days of the caravan trade is the cattle trade with the Kwanyama Ambo. As in the rubber trade the Ovimbundu make use of their intermediary geographical position. They obtain from Luanda shells called *elemande* (singular *emande*). One of these shells costs 10 escudos (2s. 6d.) at Luanda and ten of them will buy a beast in Kwanyama country. Alternatively 30 rounds of tobacco will buy a beast there. I knew several men who had made, or planned to make, trips of this nature. The analogy with the caravan trade breaks down, however, when the relative importance of the two is examined. The caravan trade determined the economic standards of the Ovimbundu, absorbed a great part of the time of every able-bodied man and youth, and influenced every aspect of Umbundu life from the foreign policy of the kings to accusations of sorcery; the cattle-keeping is relatively unimportant economically since the Ovimbundu do not drink milk, and eat meat, even chicken or pork, very irregularly, nor does the occasional sale of cattle to traders altogether balance their uncertain survival away from their indigenous grasses. The real importance of cattle in the economy seems to be as a form of capital investment for spare savings, an investment which can be liquidated either by sacrifice on ceremonial occasions or back into money by sale. Socially, it may be thought of as marking the survival of the Umbundu capacity and enthusiasm for trading in an age when the economic situation has closed the old routes. Indeed, perhaps the sub-conscious motive for the Ovimbundu who trade is to show that they can act outside of that economic framework of cultivation

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and wage labour which I have described as affecting the Ovimbundu as a whole.

It is not easy to compose budgets of household expenditure and income, partly because they have not yet much of a 'book-keeping' outlook, and partly because they suspect the motives behind questions of this sort. My own opinion is that from agriculture the average household would earn considerably less than 1,000 escudos (£12. 10s.) a year. The Banco de Angola in its Report for 1955[1] gives a budget for an African family at Silva Porto, consisting of father, mother, and two young children, having agriculture as their only source of income. Their total yearly income is given as 7,750 escudos (about £96. 17s. 6d.). Even allowing for the higher prices paid for crops on the railway line, an income of this order is far above anything earned by the average cultivating household, though it might be earned by the few men who cultivated coffee extensively and lived in Portuguese style.

Some details of the economic life of individuals may give depth to this chapter. Kambungo, a kinsman of Sapapula living in Menga, was a man of over sixty who had in his youth travelled on the caravans. He had a large house but lived in a village amongst kinsfolk. In June 1955 he had been in Kwanyama country where, with shells obtained at Luanda, he had bought cattle and for 15 of the *elemande* shells he got a sewing-machine. In the year 1955–6 (very roughly from the end of the dry season in '55 to the same period in '56) he had sold ten sacks of maize at 25 escudos each and six sacks of beans for 60 escudos each. He had, however, concluded that maize did not pay and had started to grow coffee. He had sold one beast for 900 escudos (£10. 15. 0), and had also sold ten sheep for 100 escudos (£1. 5. 0) each. He had also sold a coat for 120 escudos (£1. 10. 0).

The principal item of Kambungo's expenditure was a bicycle which he bought for 1,500 escudos (£18. 15s.). He had also bought two beds each 100 escudos, and ten plates 100 escudos altogether. He had bought ten bottles of wine, at 5 escudos each, and had also bought some indigenous rum, price not noted. Ten traditional sleeping mats cost 2½ escudos each, and four

[1] Quoted by Egerton, pp. 124–5.